The Corps' mission in Spring Valley is to identify, investigate and remove or remediate threats to human health, safety or the environment resulting from past Department of Defense activities in the area.

US Army Corps of Engineers
Baltimore District

The Corps'pondent

http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm

a newsletter by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for Spring Valley residents

July 2005

Survey, board elections, projects progress

by Gary Schilling
Program Manager

Community survey

A community survey may have already arrived in your mailbox. The Corps is seeking your input about efforts to inform and include the community in the Spring Valley Formerly Used Defense Site cleanup.

Please take the time to fill out the survey and return it in the postage-paid envelope.

Restoration Advisory Board

The Restoration Advisory Board elected five new community members and re-elected four current community members at the June meeting. Two community positions and the contractor-laborer spot remain vacant.

Current community board members are: Greg Beumel, Mario Aguilar, Clara Aisenstein, Mary Bresnahan, David A. Feary, J. Lanier Frank, Mark Leone, Dr. Lee H. Monsein, Kathleen Philbin, Malcolm L. Pritzker, Ambassador Howard B. Schaffer and Bert Weintraub.

Representatives of Horace Mann School, the Miller Company, American

Update continued on p. 3

Range fan: new investigative tool developed

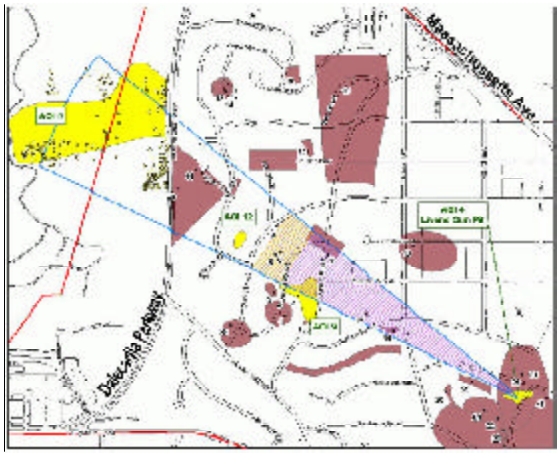
by Mary Beth Thompson
Public Affairs Specialist

A Livens battery pit, Stokes mortar firing point, firing range and impact areas — linked with firing chemical rounds for the American University Experiment Station during World War I — have been identified and plotted on a map of the Spring Valley Formerly Used Defense Site. The Livens battery pit and Stokes mortar placement, from which the munitions were launched, are co-located in the Spalding / Captain Rankin Area on the edge of the present-day American University campus. The impact areas sit northwest towards and beyond Dalecarlia Parkway.

The Corps and its Spring Valley partners — the D.C. Department of Health and the Environmental Protection Agency — refer to the area as "the range fan." This range fan is shaped roughly like an elongated cone, with the narrow end starting at the firing site and the wider end extending beyond Dalecarlia Parkway.

Area does not present greater risk

With the amount of development that has taken place and the intrusive work already done or planned for the range fan area, there is no reason to believe properties that fall within the range fan pose any



Range fan graphic by Parsons

greater risk to residents than any other typical property within the Spring Valley project area, said Spring Valley program manager Gary Schilling.

"Although it may seem daunting at first to residents who live in the range fan, it is important to remember that Spring Valley has undergone major development over several decades," Schilling said, "so it is unlikely that a resident will uncover an intact ordnance item."

Project Manager Craig Georg sent a letter to range fan property owners in May explaining the concept and ad-

Range fan continued on p. 4

Innovative tent to quicken pace of Lot 18 cleanup

by Mary Beth Thompson
Public Affairs Specialist

When Lot 18 Project Manager Craig Georg was challenged to speed up the work at the site, he and his team thought outside the box. More precisely, they thought outside the tent. The team directed its research beyond the types of tents that have been used throughout the United States for such work.

"To increase production, we needed larger equipment, and larger equipment requires a bigger structure to work within," Georg said. "The biggest problem with a larger tent is that the tent needs to be anchored and sealed to provide protection to workers and the public, but the uneven terrain at Lot 18 made sealing a larger structure nearly impossible."

A larger tent is also heavier and more difficult to move, so it takes longer to reposition.

Looking beyond U.S. boundaries, Georg's team of experts found a solution — an innovative, British-made "inflatable building" that can be configured to 60 feet by 100 feet. The structure is made up of air cells, is strong but relatively light in weight, does not require a crane to move and conforms to rugged topography. It is self-supporting and designed for extended outdoor use.

"It takes less time to move, and it can be used in very steep areas," Georg said. "It will give us much more flexibility."

The team, now working within a 60- by 100-foot metal frame tent until the inflatable tent is set up, also employs other improvements to increase production. A larger excavator is being used to dig. Dirt and debris are being sorted on a shaker table instead of the former manual sifting table. Previously, the soil had been packed into drums, loaded onto trucks and carted from the site.

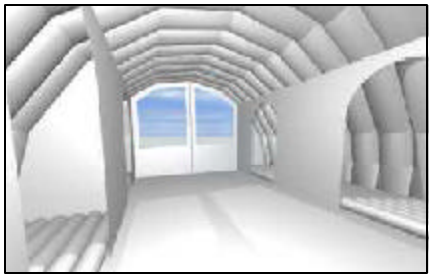
The air-frame tent that will replace the metal-frame tent at Lot 18 is partially inflated while under construction at the factory. *Photo courtesy of ITEK*

The soil now goes into a more efficient roll-off container that will be moved by conveyer to a truck. Tarps will cover the soil during the loading and removal to keep it contained when leaving the site and until it is ultimately disposed of at an approved site.

The air monitoring scheme has also been revamped to make it more efficient.

These changes were reviewed by the regulatory partners, D.C. Health and the Environmental Protection Agency; the Corps' Engineering Support Center, Huntsville; Corps headquarters and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health.

Georg expects to have enough of the improvements in place to be able to complete the Lot 18 dig in January 2006, assuming nothing is found that changes the character of the investigation. After that, six additional metallic anomalies in the vicinity of Lot 18 will also be investigated. The Corps expects to be demobilized from the site by the end of February.



This inside view of an air-frame tent gives a sense of its structure.
Drawing courtesy of ITEK-USA.com

"The increased efficiency comes with a price tag," said Gary Schilling, program manager, "but the Corps and the Army are making sure that the cost of accelerating the Lot 18 work does not slow down the other ongoing Spring Valley investigations."

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University, the D.C. Health Department, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Corps also sit on the board.

For meeting minutes, visit the Spring Valley web site: **www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm**

Soil removal

Sevenson, the soil removal contractor, continues to work in the yards of apartment buildings on 47th Street. To date, a total of 37 project properties have been cleaned of soil containing elevated arsenic.

In June, Project Manager Ed Hughes sent an update letter to all property owners awaiting arsenic soil remediation. The Corps plans to have all the residential properties done by September 2008 and the federal property completed in 2009.

Groundwater investigation

Installation of groundwater monitoring wells is moving ahead with 23 of 30 completed. Elevation data from the earliest installed wells shows the groundwater level near Dalecarlia reservoir flows in the general direction of the reservoir. A clearer picture of the flow direction for the land between the Dalecarlia Parkway and the reservoir will be obtained later this summer.

Sampling for potential contaminants will take place later this summer. Preliminary results should be available by the end of September.

Determining which chemicals to test for and how to test for them presented the partners with complex decisions to make. They considered 662 chemicals associated with the American University Experiment Station, evaluating the toxicity, the analytical methods available and their environmental fate, in addition to several other factors, before reaching agreement to analyze for 165 chemicals.

Phytoremediation

For the 2005 phytoremediation study, 9,910 ferns were planted in May. This year's work is an expansion of the initial study in 2004. The goal of the study is to determine whether phytoremediation can be a viable tool in removing arsenic from Spring Valley soil.

Residential anomalies

Nine properties are scheduled for intrusive investigation this summer. Work will begin this month and is scheduled to take about six weeks.

Lot 18

Digging restarted at Lot 18 June 20 under a new 60- by 100-foot metal-frame tent. The bigger tent holds larger and more efficient equipment, which allows the work to move more quickly. The new approach is designed to speed up the investigation while providing the same level of protection to the public and the workers.

Media representatives toured the site June 17.

Lot 18 is located on the southwestern edge of the American University campus. Daily updates of the dig are posted on the web site and the information line, (800) 434-0988. For more information on Lot 18, see the story on p. 2.

Range fan

See story starting on p. 1.

Reporters are briefed on the Personnel Decontamination Station at the Lot 18 Media Day June 17.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo by Chanel S. Weaver

Spring Valley notes

Having digging done on your property?

Safety fact sheets designed for contractors working in Spring Valley are available from the Corps of Engineers:

- Call the toll-free information line at (800) 434-0988; or
- Call the community outreach team at (410) 962-0157; or
- Send a request via email to *Ben.Rooney@usace.army.mil*.

Provide a mailing address, and the safety fact sheet will be sent to you.

Upcoming Restoration Advisory Board meetings

Tuesday, July 12
7 p.m.
St. David's Episcopal Church
Macomb Street
Community session from 6:30 to 7 p.m. with EPA, D.C. Health and the Corps

Community Survey

To obtain feedback on the Corps' communications with the public, a survey was sent to Spring Valley residents. Please fill yours out and return it in the postage paid envelope. Thank you.

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Range fan *continued from p. 1*

dressing anticipated questions and concerns. Georg advised residents to remain familiar with the safety fact sheet, just as all other Spring Valley residents should, until the entire project is completed. The safety fact sheet was mailed to all residences in 2002 and again in 2004. (*Editor's note: to obtain a copy of the safety fact sheet, see p. 3,* **Having digging done on your property?**)

Gathering, examining information

The range fan is an investigative tool that provides the partners with a different way to look at past and current investigations on properties in the area to determine whether further investigation is needed. The partners are compiling and reviewing the available data and will continue to share information with property owners and the Restoration Advisory Board as key questions are identified and answered.

"In general at the Spring Valley site, the objective of the geophysical investigations is to locate pits and trenches," Steve Hirsh, EPA's remedial project manager, said. "In the range fan, we are also interested in investigating a percentage of single point anomalies, which may be munitions that were fired."

What the Corps and its partners will learn from the range fan is yet to be seen.

"It may turn out that the geophysical and soil sampling already completed and what we are planning to do in the future will answer the range fan questions," Georg said. "If not, the partners will plan additional investigations they deem necessary."

Research provided clues

The Livens battery pit, built of concrete, still exists today, although it is partially buried. A historic photo shows its position relative to the co-located mortar placement site. "As-built " drawings were prepared during a dig at the Spalding/Captain Rankin area. The drawings give the dimensions of the gun pit. From these pieces of information, the team determined the location and facing of the firing area.

Historical research led the team to the assumption that Livens projectors and 3-inch and 4-inch Stokes mortars were the weapons systems used. Further research into Army manuals provided information on the accuracy and degree of deflection for the ordnance, as well as the weapon systems and range safety practices.

Other investigative and anecdotal information was also used to help plot the probable range fan and impact areas for munitions launched from this firing point.

The Corps'pondent

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